Appl. No. 10/065,903
Amdt. dated December 23, 2005
Reply to Office action of September 23, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. Rejection of claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph:

Claims 1 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph as failing to comply

with the written description requirement.

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Response:

Independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to overcome this rejection. Claims 1

and 9 have been amended back to their original forms. The word "directly" has been

removed from the claims, and the remaining claimed limitations are supported and

10   described in the specification. Reconsideration of claims 1 and 9 is respectfully requested.

2. Rejection of claims 1-4, 8, 9-12, and 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 1-4, 8, 9-12, and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Hannah (US 5,784,581) in view of Shires (US 5,167,028).

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Response:

The applicant would like to point out the patentable differences between the

limitations contained in independent claims 1 and 9 and the prior art combination of

Hannah and Shires.

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The present invention according to claims 1 and 9 specify that a master computer

and a slave computer are connected to a portable storage device through a master port and

a slave port, respectively. After connection, the master computer acts as a master device

with respect to both the portable storage device and the slave computer. In contrast, the

25   slave computer acts as a slave device with respect to both the master computer and the

portable storage device. The result of this is that the master computer is able to access

data on both the portable storage device and the storage apparatuses of the slave computer.

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On the other hand, the slave computer is not able to access data on either the master computer or the portable storage device.

5   **Hannah** teaches in Figure 4 (among other figures) a peripheral device 34 containing storage 46, a privileged port 40 for connecting to an upstream device, and a hub 42 for a connecting to a downstream device. However, Hannah does not teach the connection of a master computer and a slave computer to the peripheral device 34.

10   Typically, when a computer is connected to a portable storage device such as a USB device, the computer acts as a master device with respect to the portable storage device. However, one distinguishing characteristic of the present invention is that the slave computer acts as a slave device with respect to the portable storage device.

15   Hannah does not teach or suggest the possibility of connecting a computer to the peripheral device 34 where the computer acts as a slave device and the peripheral device acts as its master device. Hannah only teaches that disk drives, cameras, and VCRs are used as downstream devices. Hannah does not provide any teaching or motivation for connecting a computer to the peripheral device 34 as a slave device since this is contrary to the conventional system of a computer acting as a master device with respect to a

20   portable storage device.

      Shires teaches in Figure 1 that a multiprocessor system contains a master processor 12 and a slave processor 16. The master processor 12 has a dedicated master memory 20, the slave processor 16 has a dedicated slave memory 22, and a shared memory 24 is used

25   for sharing data between the dedicated master memory 20 and the dedicated slave memory 22.

      However, Shires merely teaches a single multiprocessor system 10. Shires does not

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teach a master computer communicating with a slave computer via a portable storage

device. The shared memory structure of a multiprocessor system is not analogous to

communication between two or more computers through a portable storage device, and

one skilled in the art would not be motivated to take the teachings from Shires'

5   multiprocessor system and apply it to the claimed portable storage device for connection

with both a master computer and a slave computer.

For the above reasons, the applicant submits that claims 1 and 9 are not obvious over

the combination of Hannah and Shires. Claims 2-4, 8, 10-12, and 16-18 are dependent on

10   claims 1 and 9, and should be allowed if claims 1 and 9 are allowed. Reconsideration of

claims 1-4, 8, 9-12, and 16-18 is respectfully requested.

3. Rejection of claims 5 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 5 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

15   Hannah (US 5,784,581) and Shires (US 5,167,028), and further in view of Smith et al (US

6,633,933).

Response:

Claims 5 and 13 are dependent on claims 1 and 9, respectively, and should be

20   allowed if claims 1 and 9 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 5 and 13 is respectfully

requested.

4. Rejection of claims 6 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 6 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

25   Hannah (US 5,784,581) and Shires (US 5,167,028), and further in view of Knight et al.

(US 2003/0163587).

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Response:

Claims 6 and 14 are dependent on claims 1 and 9, respectively, and should be allowed if claims 1 and 9 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 6 and 14 is respectfully requested.

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5. Rejection of claims 7 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 7 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hannah (US 5,784,581) and Shires (US 5,167,028), and further in view of Deng et al. (US 6,829,672).
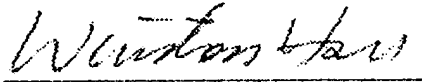
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Response:

Claims 7 and 15 are dependent on claims 1 and 9, respectively, and should be allowed if claims 1 and 9 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 7 and 15 is respectfully requested.

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In view of the above statements in favor of patentability, the applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Sincerely yours,

Winston Hsu

Date: _____ 12/23/2005 _____

Winston Hsu, Patent Agent No. 41,526

5   P.O. BOX 506, Merrifield, VA 22116, U.S.A.

Voice Mail: 302-729-1562

Facsimile: 806-498-6673

e-mail : winstonhsu@naipo.com

10   Note: Please leave a message in my voice mail if you need to talk to me. (The time in D.C.
is 13 hours behind the Taiwan time, i.e. 9 AM in D.C. = 10 PM in Taiwan.)

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